

Senate Bill No. 424

CHAPTER 9

An act to add Section 6720 to the Government Code, relating to Armenia.

[Approved by Governor April 21, 2005. Filed with
Secretary of State April 21, 2005.]

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SB 424, Poochigian. Armenian Genocide.

Existing law requires the Governor to proclaim certain days every year for specified reasons.

This bill would establish April 24 of each year as the "California Day of Remembrance of the Armenian Genocide" and the period beginning on the Sunday before that day through the following Sunday as the days of remembrance of the Armenian Genocide.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

SECTION 1. (a) Upon the occasion of the 90th anniversary of the Armenian Genocide, the Legislature recognizes that 1,500,000 Armenians living in their 3,000-year historic homeland were subjected to torture, starvation, and murder, including death marches into the Syrian desert, by the rulers of the Ottoman Turkish Empire and the exile of more than 500,000 innocent people during the period from 1915–23. The Armenian Genocide, also known as the "First Genocide of the Twentieth Century," represented a deliberate attempt to eliminate all traces of a thriving noble civilization.

(b) In recognition of the anniversary of this Genocide and an open condemnation of these crimes against humanity, it is crucial to publicly acknowledge the occurrence of the Armenian Genocide, as it is denied to this day by the Republic of Turkey, and to prevent the repetition of similar future atrocities committed against any people.

(c) Armenian communities all over the world commemorate this great tragedy on April 24, because it was on that day in 1915 when hundreds of Armenian intellectual, political, religious, and business leaders were arrested and taken from their homes in Constantinople before dawn and brutally murdered.

SEC. 2. Section 6720 is added to the Government Code, to read:

6720. April 24 of each year shall be the "California Day of Remembrance of the Armenian Genocide," and the period beginning on the Sunday before that day through the following Sunday shall be the days of remembrance in this state, and shall annually be so proclaimed by the

Governor, in memory of the 1,500,000 victims who were subjected to torture, starvation, and murder, including death marches into the Syrian desert, by the rulers of the Ottoman Turkish Empire and the exile of more than 500,000 innocent people during the period from 1915 to 1923, inclusive, and in honor of the survivors of those crimes against humanity.

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